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HOUSE BILL 2597

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State of Washington                      60th Legislature                      2008 Regular Session

By Representatives Sullivan, Pedersen, Hasegawa, Ormsby, Haigh,  
Chase, Green, and Simpson

Prefiled 01/10/08. Read first time 01/14/08. Referred to Committee  
on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1            AN ACT Relating to creating a kindergarten readiness assessment;  
2 adding a new section to chapter 43.215 RCW; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 28A.655 RCW; and creating new sections.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds compelling evidence  
6 from research and from the efforts of innovative school districts in  
7 Washington that if students enter the K-12 public schools ready to  
8 learn, their progress and achievement is much greater than for students  
9 who lack foundational knowledge and skills. The legislature further  
10 finds that the foundational skills for kindergarten success can be  
11 assessed using a simple rubric. Many school districts are using such  
12 a rubric and are working closely with early learning providers and  
13 parents in their communities. However, because there is no common  
14 kindergarten readiness assessment, there is no statewide baseline for  
15 students' readiness to learn. Such a baseline is critical for  
16 developing new early interventions with struggling students and for  
17 measuring the impact of such initiatives as full-day kindergarten. A  
18 common assessment could also serve as an accountability and quality  
19 measure for early learning.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 43.215 RCW  
2 to read as follows:

3        (1)    The department, in collaboration with the office of the  
4 superintendent of public instruction, shall develop and make available  
5 a kindergarten readiness assessment for use by all public elementary  
6 schools as provided under section 4 of this act.

7        (2)    In developing the assessment, the department shall examine:

8            (a)    Research on the critical knowledge and skills for successful  
9 entry and progress in kindergarten;

10          (b)    Examples of assessments used by schools and early learning  
11 providers in Washington state; and

12          (c)    Examples of assessments used by schools and early learning  
13 providers in other states.

14        (3)    The kindergarten readiness assessment must address the  
15 following knowledge and skills, at a minimum:

16            (a)    Letters and sounds;

17            (b)    Numbers and number concepts; and

18            (c)    Social skills for the school environment.

19        (4)    Results from the kindergarten readiness assessment must be  
20 reportable in a common format at a school, school district, and  
21 statewide level.

22        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 3.**    (1) The department of early learning shall  
23 submit a report with recommendations for implementing the kindergarten  
24 readiness assessment to the governor and the education and early  
25 learning committees of the legislature by January 10, 2009.    The  
26 recommendations shall include:

27            (a)    The proposed kindergarten readiness assessment;

28            (b)    The proposed assessment results reporting system;

29            (c)    A proposed plan for professional development of individuals who  
30 will administer the assessment to ensure reliable and comparable  
31 results; and

32            (d)    A proposed plan for communicating with early learning providers  
33 and parents about the knowledge and skills covered by the kindergarten  
34 readiness assessment.

35        (2)    The department and the office of the superintendent of public  
36 instruction shall conduct voluntary field tests of the kindergarten

1 readiness assessment in school districts during the 2009-10 school  
2 year.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.655  
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, school districts shall  
6 offer the kindergarten readiness assessment developed and provided by  
7 the department of early learning under section 2 of this act to all  
8 students entering the district's kindergarten program.

9 (2) The school district shall report results of the assessment to  
10 the parents or guardians of students who take the assessment and shall  
11 report results to the office of the superintendent of public  
12 instruction using a common reporting format specified by the office.

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